

REMARKS

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the Final Office Action dated March 18, 2010. The Examiner rejects claims 1-3, 10-13, 16, and 17 and objects to claims 4-8, 14, 15 and 18. With this amendment, claims 4-6, 14, and 15 are amended, claims 1-3, 10-13 and 16-17 are canceled, and no claims are added. After entry of this Amendment, claims 4-8, 13-15 and 18 are pending in the Application. Reconsideration of the Application is respectfully requested in light of the remarks and amendments made herein.

The Examiner rejects claims 1-3, 10, 12, 16 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Hirano (US 6,460,642) in view of Asao et al. (US 2004/0251858) and rejects claims 1 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Hirano in view of Abujdom II et al. (US 4,976,327).

Applicant thanks the Examiner for noting that claims 4-8, 14, 15 and 18 would be allowable if amended to overcome the objection to these claims as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. In response, Applicant has amended claims 4-6, 14 and 15 into independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 1-3, 10-13, 16 and 17 are canceled, rendering the rejection to these claims moot. In light of these amendments, Applicant submits that the objected-to claims, and claims dependent therefrom, are allowable.

It is submitted that this Amendment has antecedent basis in the Application as originally filed, including the specification, claims, and drawings, and that this Amendment does not add any new subject matter to the application. It is submitted that this Amendment places the Application in suitable condition for allowance; notice of which is requested.

If the Examiner feels the prosecution of the Application can be expedited by way of an Examiner's amendment, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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